

PRESS RELEASE

451 West Street, Suite 2
Amherst MA 01002-2999
Voice (413) 253-4300
Fax (413) 253-4347
TDD (413) 253-4590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 8, 2006

CONTACT: Maril Alsup
Public Affairs Specialist
(413) 253-4314
maril.alsup@ma.usda.gov

USDA Rural Development Announces Availability of Funds for Housing Preservation Grants

Amherst, MA –USDA Rural Development announced today that it is soliciting competitive applications under its Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) program. The HPG program is a grant program which provides qualified public agencies, private nonprofit organizations, and other eligible entities grant funds to assist very low- and low-income homeowners in repairing and rehabilitating their homes in rural areas. In addition, the HPG program assists rental property owners and cooperative housing complexes in repairing and rehabilitating their units if they agree to make such units available to low- and very low-income persons. The grants are competitive and are made available in areas where there is a concentration of need. The population limit of towns served is 20,000.

HPG funds received by sponsors are combined with other programs or funds and used as loans, grants, or subsidies for recipient households based on a plan contained in the sponsor's application. Funds must be used within a two-year period.

The closing deadline for receipt of all applications in response to this Notice of Funds Availability is 5 p.m., on May 19, 2006. The application closing deadline is firm as to date and hour. USDA Rural Development will not consider any application that is received after the closing deadline. Applicants intending to mail applications must provide sufficient time to permit delivery on or before the closing deadline date and time. Acceptance by the United States Postal Service or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Facsimile (FAX) and postage due applications will not be accepted. Applications can be mailed to the USDA Rural Development State Office at: 451 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002 or to any of USDA Rural Development's area offices. For addresses of the area offices please call: (413) 253-4315 or visit: www.rurdev.usda.gov/ma (area offices are located throughout Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island).

To speak to someone at USDA Rural Development about the HPG program, please call Paul Geoffroy at: (413) 253-4315 or email: paul.geoffroy@ma.usda.gov.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans. USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. In Fiscal Year 2005, USDA Rural Development provided over \$113 million in assistance to rural communities and families in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

###